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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Art Unit: 3754 }
Atty. Docket: 8266-0823 }
Applicant: Eckstein et al. }
Title: HYDRAULIC CONTROL }
APPARATUS FOR A }
HOSPITAL BED }
Serial No.: 10/085,966 }
Filed: February 28, 2002 }
Examiner: Keasel, E. }

Certificate Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.8(a)

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on May 19, 2004

D. Cwiklinski
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Dated: May 19, 2004

APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

This Appeal Brief is submitted in triplicate and furtherance of the Notice of Appeal filed January 21, 2004. A Final Rejection was issued October 21, 2003. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.192, an Appendix containing a copy of the claims involved in the appeal is attached. Applicants have also enclosed a check, \$330.00 of which is intended to satisfy the 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c) Appeal Brief filing fee.

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Real Party in Interest

The above-referenced application has been assigned to Hill-Rom Services, Inc., which is a Delaware corporation headquartered in Batesville, Indiana.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals or interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

Status of Claims

Claims 21-27, 40, and 56-63 are pending in the above-identified application and are attached hereto as Appendix A.

Claims 21, 25, 27, and 40 are withdrawn as being directed toward a non-elected invention.

Claims 56 and 61-63 are rejected as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Claims 58-63 are rejected as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 26, 57, and 58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,358,213 to Pilolla (hereinafter "Pilolla").

Claims 22-24, 55, and 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pilolla in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,487,493 to McNabb (hereinafter "McNabb").

Accordingly, claims 22-24, 26, and 55-63 are on appeal.

Status of Amendments

An amendment filed on December 22, 2003, subsequent to the Final Rejection, was denied entry prior to this Appeal in an Advisory Action mailed January 13, 2004. Subsequently, a Petition From Refusal To Admit Amendment under §1.127 was filed on January 23, 2004. After calling the USPTO and attempting to contact the proper director, Applicants were asked and did re-forward the Petition to the USPTO on March 19, 2004. After again calling the USPTO and being told that the Petition could not be found, Applicants again forwarded the Petition on April 9, 2004. As of this filing, the Petition is still not shown as received on the PAIR system. As such, this Appeal Brief is filed assuming (1) non-entrance of the Amendment and (2) that the renumbering performed by the Examiner in the last Official Action was entered as an Examiner's amendment. The assumed non-entrance of the Amendment is not a concession that the amendment should not be entered, nor does it withdraw the Petition. While Applicants wished to have the Petition ruled upon to provide a fully settled list of claims, this Appeal Brief is filed now in that Applicants do not wish to incur more extension fees when action on the Petition does not appear to be imminent.

Summary of the Invention

The following is a concise explanation of the invention defined in the claims involved in this appeal. However, the citations in the following summary should not be construed as the only locations of support in the application for the claims involved in this appeal. Further, the following should not be construed to limit the claims involved in this appeal or any other patentable feature of the present disclosure.

With regard to independent claim 22, the present invention includes a valve assembly including: a manifold block (134) having an inlet (142), an outlet (146), and a conduit (182) in fluid communication with the inlet (178) and with the outlet (180), a valve having a portion (190) movable within the conduit (182) between a first position inhibiting fluid communication between the inlet (178) and the outlet (180), and a second position permitting fluid communication between the inlet (178) and the outlet (180); a lever (210) connected to the valve to permit manual movement of the valve between the first and the second positions; a solenoid (184) connected to the valve to move the valve between the first and second positions in response to an electrical input to the solenoid (184), the position of the lever (210) being independent of the presence of the electrical input to the solenoid (184); and a lock (216, 260) engaging the lever (210) in a position having the valve in the second position. (Applicants' specification, pages 10-13).

With regard to claim 26, the present invention includes a valve assembly for a hospital bed including: a manifold block (134) having an inlet (142), an outlet (146) configured to connect to a device for positioning a bed, and a conduit (182) in fluid communication with the inlet (178) and with the outlet (180), a valve having a portion (190) movable within the conduit (182) between a first position inhibiting fluid communication between the inlet (178) and the outlet (180), and a second position permitting fluid communication between the inlet (178) and the outlet (180); a lever (210) connected to the valve to permit manual movement of the valve between the first and the second positions, the lever being located entirely outside the conduit; a solenoid (184) connected directly to the valve to move the valve between the first and second positions in response to an electrical input to the solenoid (184), the position of the lever (210) being independent of the presence of the electrical input to the solenoid (184), the solenoid (184) being positioned between the manifold (134) and the lever (210). (Applicants' specification, pages 10-13).

With regard to independent claim 58, the present invention includes a valve assembly including: a manifold block (134) having an inlet (142), an outlet (146), a conduit (182) in fluid communication with the inlet (178) and with the outlet (180), a valve having a portion

(190) movable within the conduit (182) between a first position inhibiting fluid communication between the inlet (178) and the outlet (180), and a second position permitting fluid communication between the inlet (178) and the outlet (180); a lever (210) connected to the valve to permit manual movement of the valve between the first and the second positions, the lever including first and second bias mechanisms (254, 256), the first bias mechanism (254) urging the lever toward a position that places the valve in the second position, the second bias mechanism (256) urging the lever away from the position that places the valve in the second position; and a solenoid (184) connected to the valve to move the valve between the first and second positions in response to an electrical input to the solenoid (184), the position of the lever (210) being independent of the presence of the electrical input to the solenoid (184). (Applicants' specification, pages 10-13).

Issues

- I. Are claims 26, 57, and 58 unpatentable over Pilolla under 35 USC §102(b)?
- II. Are claims 22-24, 55 and 56 unpatentable over Pilolla in view of McNabb under 35 USC §103(a)?
- III. Do claims 56 and 61-63 fail to comply with the written description requirement?
- IV. Are claims 58-63 indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention?

Grouping of Claims

Claims 22-24, 26, and 56-58 are believed to be separately patentable. However, for the purposes of this appeal, the claims are grouped as follows.

- I. Claims 22-24
- II. Claim 26 and 57
- III. Claim 55
- IV. Claim 56
- V. Claim 58
- VI. Claim 61
- VII. Claim 62
- VIII. Claim 63

Arguments

I. Claims 26, 57, and 58 are patentable over Pilolla under 35 USC §102(b).

Claims 26, 57, and 58 are currently rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,358,213 to Pilolla. Pilolla relates to a Faucet Having Automatic and Manual Control Capability. A faucet body 10 includes a base or housing section 12, middle or spout section 40, and a top section 60. A portion of the base section 12 is covered by a decorative shell 34 which conceals inlet conduits 32. Middle section 40 includes a cylindrical portion and an outwardly extending spout 42. Spout 42 defines a passage or conduit 48 in communication with channel 28 of the base 12. Middle section 40 also includes a valve member 100 therein which is axially movable between a closed position illustrated in Fig. 1 and an open position illustrated in Figs. 2 and 4. Electrical solenoid 140 is also positioned within upper cylindrical cavity 45 of the middle section 40 and is able to move valve member 100. (Pilolla, cols. 2-4).

A lever 180 is attached to top section 60. Lever 180 includes handle portion 182 and a pin 188 to couple the lever 180 to the top section 60. Lever 180 facilitates manual actuation of the faucet through movement of the valve member 100.

CLAIMS 26 and 57 ARE PATENTABLE OVER PILOLLA

Independent claim 26 specifically claims “the solenoid being positioned between the manifold and the lever.”

The Examiner, in his rejection, stated, “A solenoid (140) is positioned between the manifold (which is defined as the areas with the inlet, outlet, and conduit therebetween) and the lever.” The Examiner also states “A lever (182) is pivotally connected to the manifold (see ref. no. 189 and column 5, lines 33-37).” First, the Examiner has attempted to improperly define the manifold as an area. Claim 26 requires the manifold to be an object, not an area. Secondly, the Examiner is not consistent in his application of his definition of the manifold. Clearly, the pivotal connection 189, which the Examiner states is part of the manifold (“A lever (182) is pivotally connected to the manifold”), is not part of “the inlet, outlet, and conduit therebetween” which the Examiner has stated to be the boundaries of the manifold. Therefore, the Examiner has improperly defined the manifold and the Examiner has not been consistent in his definition.

The Examiner further responded to Applicants’ arguments by stating that the Applicants have not made arguments consistent with the Applicants’ own definition of manifold. Applicants note that the Applicants have consistently defined manifold as a piece

that contains the inlet, outlet, and conduit therebetween. The piece of Pilolla that contains the inlet, outlet, and conduit therebetween is the base 12 which includes the inlet 32, and the middle section 40 which includes the conduit 48 and spout 42. Middle section 40 also houses solenoid 140. Thus, the section that contains the inlet, outlet and conduit also contains the solenoid. Therefore, the solenoid is within the manifold. As such, the solenoid is not located in between the manifold and the lever. Claim 26 is not anticipated by Pilolla. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that independent claim 26, and claim 57 that depends therefrom, patentably define the invention over Pilolla. Therefore, Applicants submit that the Examiner's rejections of claims 26 and 57 are without merit and reversal thereof is respectfully requested.

CLAIM 58 IS PATENTABLE OVER PILOLLA

Independent claim 58 specifically claims "the lever including first and second bias mechanisms."

The Examiner, in his rejection, stated, "the broadly worded biasing mechanisms can be read as the user's hand lifting the lever and gravity working in the other direction." Furthermore, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner stated "'biasing mechanism' is much broader than spring." While the language of claim 58 is broad to encompass any number of biasing mechanisms, such a term does not read on a user's hand and gravity. Furthermore, the claim requires "the lever including first and second bias mechanisms." (emphasis added). The lever of Pilolla does not include a user's hand, nor does it include gravity. Such a reading is improper.

For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that independent claim 58 patentably defines the invention over Pilolla. Therefore, Applicants submit that the Examiner's rejection of claim 58 is without merit and reversal thereof is respectfully requested.

II. Claims 22-24 and 55-56 are patentable over Pilolla in view of McNabb under 35 USC §103(a).

Claims 22-24, 55 and 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pilolla in view of McNabb. McNabb teaches a Frozen Beverage Dispensing Apparatus including a valve 14. Valve 14 includes a valve body 16, a dispensing faucet 18, and lever member 20. Lever member 20 is provided for operating valve 14. A securing device 22 is provided for securing lever member 20 in response to a predetermined condition. When the

apparatus is in a defrost cycle, a beverage therein will be in a more liquid state and will be dispensed with greater force than when the beverage is more frozen. Therefore, the securing device 22 engages the lever member 20 when the apparatus is in defrost cycle to prevent the lever member 20 from moving so as to open the valve 14.

CLAIMS 22-24 ARE PATENTABLE OVER THE COMBINATION OF
PILOLLA AND MCNABB

Applicants submit that there is no suggestion in Pilolla or McNabb of any motivation to combine Pilolla with McNabb to produce the claimed invention.

In the Official Actions, the Examiner states that, “It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used the lock bar and lock solenoid of McNabb in the valve assembly of Pilolla in order to secure the lever in position as taught by McNabb.” This conclusory statement fails to provide any teaching from within the references showing the desirability of such a combination. Likewise, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner merely states, “the motivation is clearly stated in McNabb,” without stating what the motivation is or where it is stated. Applicants are unable to find any such motivation.

When combining the content of various references, “there must be some teaching, suggestion or motivation in the prior art to make the specific combination that was made by the examiner.” In re Dance, 48 USPQ2d 1635, 1637 (Fed. Cir. 1998); In re Raynes, 28 USPQ2d 1630, 1631 (Fed. Cir. 1993); In re Oetiker, 24 USPQ2d 1443, 1445 (Fed. Cir. 1992). “The mere fact that the prior art could be so modified would not have made the modification obvious unless the prior art suggested the desirability of the modification.” In re Gordon, 221 USPQ 1125, 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1984). “Obviousness cannot be established by hindsight combination to produce the claimed invention.” In re Dance, 48 USPQ2d at 1637; In re Gorman, 18 USPQ2d 1885, 1888 (Fed. Cir. 1991). “Determination of obviousness cannot be based on the hindsight combination of components selectively culled from the prior art to fit the parameters of the patented invention. There must be a teaching or suggestion within the prior art, or within the general knowledge of a person of ordinary skill in the field of the invention, to look to particular sources of information, to select particular elements, and to combine them in the way they were combined by the inventor.” ATD Corp. v. Lydall Inc., 48 USPQ2d 1321, 1329 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

Finally, “both the suggestion and the reasonable expectation of success must be founded in the prior art, and not in the applicant’s disclosure.” In re Vaeck, 20 USPQ2d at

1442. “[I]t is the prior art itself, and not the applicant’s achievement, that must establish the obviousness of the combination.” In re Dance, 48 USPQ2d at 1637; Interconnect Planning Corp. v. Feil, 227 USPQ 543, 551 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

“Combining prior art references without evidence of such a suggestion, teaching, or motivation simply takes the inventor’s disclosure as a blueprint for piecing together the prior art to defeat patentability--the essence of hindsight.” In re Dembiczak, 50 USPQ2d at 1617; Feil, 227 USPQ at 547 (Fed. Cir. 1985). Following this methodology is especially important in cases where the invention is less technologically complex, “where the very ease with which the invention can be understood may prompt one to ‘fall victim to the insidious effect of a hindsight syndrome wherein that which only the inventor taught is used against its teacher’”. Id.

The Examiner has stated that the proposed combination results in a lock holding the lever of Pilolla in an open position. Nothing in Pilolla discloses a lock and nothing in McNabb teaches locking a valve in an open position. Furthermore, there is no reason to apply a lock to the faucet of Pilolla. The lever of Pilolla employs a friction hinge such that the lever stays in any position in which it is placed. (Pilolla, Col. 6, lines 44-57). Therefore, a lock to hold the lever in place is unnecessary. Furthermore, Pilolla discloses no specific danger why the faucet would need to be locked on or locked off. Therefore, the danger prevented by the lock in McNabb is not a danger present with the faucet of Pilolla. As such, no motivation for adding a lock can be gleaned from Pilolla.

Furthermore, as stated, the lock in McNabb is present to lock a valve in a closed position to prevent leakage and to prevent opening the valve when the condition of the liquid makes it unsafe to dispense. The lock is necessary because a defrosting liquid may exit the valve in a dangerous manner. (McNabb, Col. 1, lines 16-32). This danger is not present with the faucet of Pilolla. Therefore, McNabb can not be held to suggest the desirability of a combination with Pilolla. The proposed combination is a product of impermissible hindsight used to find the claimed elements and place them together without motivation to do so.

While there is no suggestion for the combination, even if there were, combining the securing device of McNabb which engages a lever to hold a valve in a closed position with the lever of Pilolla will not result in preventing movement of the valve of Pilolla. By virtue of the lost motion connection between the levers (182, 160) of Pilolla and the armature 156/valve member 100, locking the position of the levers (182,160) will not lock the valve in the closed position. Therefore, one attempting to lock the position of the valve would not apply the securing device 22 of McNabb to the lever of Pilolla. The fact that the combination

results in a non-working device shows that there is no reasonable expectation of success, thus providing another reason why the Examiner's combination is improper.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. The Examiner has merely identified a reference that shows a lock for a lever and declared that feature properly combinable with Pilolla. Without some teaching, suggestion or motivation to modify Pilolla to incorporate that feature, however, such a combination is an impermissible application of hindsight. Also, without a showing of a reasonable expectation of the success of the combination, the combination is improper. Therefore, claim 22 as well as depending claims 23 and 24 are believed to be allowable. Reversal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CLAIM 55 IS PATENTABLE OVER THE COMBINATION OF PILOLLA
AND MCNABB

Claim 55 depends from claim 22, therefore, claim 55 is allowable for all of the reasons stated with respect to claim 22. Additionally, claim 55 requires that the lock is integral with the lever.

In the last Official Action, the Examiner stated, "'integral' must be read broadly as applicant's lock only is indirectly connected to the lever through other parts in the non-engaging setting." The Examiner was then referred to extension portion 260 (Figs. 13-16) of pedal 231. Extension portion 260 acts as a lock by fixing the position of the lock bar 216 and of the lever arm 208 when the lock bar is within the extension portion 260. Extension portion 260 is integral with the lever arm 208. Therefore, integral may be given its ordinary meaning and as such, the proposed combination does not teach the lock being integral with the lever. Therefore, claim 55 is believed to be allowable. Reversal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CLAIM 56 IS PATENTABLE OVER THE COMBINATION OF PILOLLA
AND MCNABB

Claim 56 depends from claim 22, therefore, claim 56 is allowable for all of the reasons stated with respect to claim 22. Additionally, claim 56 requires that the lock is activated by pressure on the lever.

In the last official action the Examiner stated, "if 'pressure' is meant to be 'solenoid actuated', then the modified Pilolla meets the claim." The Applicants respectfully note that what is meant is the ordinary meaning of the terms. Thus, the limitation of claim 56 is

intended to mean that activation of the lock is achieved by applying pressure to the lever. With respect to the Examiner's rejection, the proposed combination has the solenoid lock of McNabb engaging the lever of Pilolla. There is no amount of pressure that can be applied to the lever that will cause the solenoid lock of McNabb to be applied. The application of the lock in McNabb is independent of any pressures felt by the lever. In the proposed combination, it is an electrical current applied to the solenoid that causes activation of the lock, not pressure. Reversal of the rejection of claim 56 is respectfully requested.

III. Claims 56 and 61-63 comply with the written description requirement.

The Examiner rejected claims 56 and 61-63 for failing to comply with the written description requirement. With respect to claim 56, the Examiner was referred to paragraph 0044 which states in relevant part "When a pedal 231 of a lever arm 208, 210, 212 is **depressed**, lever arm 208, 210, 212 pivots about pivot bar 206, lock bar 216 rides over cam 240 compressing springs 220 while passing over cam 240 as shown, for example, in FIG. 15, **until lock bar 216 reaches extension portion 260**, i.e. between cam 240 and first end stop 236, of arcuate surface 234 allowing springs 220 to again expand as shown, for example, in FIG. 16." (emphasis added) Thus, the lock is disclosed to be actuatable by depressing the lever arm. However, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner stated, "the passage cited by the applicant regarding claim 56 discloses mechanical actuation with no pressure involved." Therefore, Applicants again note that the movement described in the above passage is movement "When a pedal 231 of lever arm 208, 210, 212 is **depressed**." (emphasis added) Reversal of the new matter rejection for claim 56 is respectfully requested.

With respect to claims 61-63, the Examiner stated, "The first position is defined in claim 58 as the closed position. In the application as filed, neither in the closed position nor in any other position are the relative forces of the springs biasing the lever defined, much less defined as being equal." The Examiner was referred to paragraph 0045 which states in relevant part "When caregiver ceases lifting pedal 231, springs 254, 256 return lever arm 208, 210, 212 to the neutral position." Thus, while not specifically discussing the spring coefficients of the springs 254, 256, the neutral position is clearly defined (and shown in Fig. 13) as the position of rest. Such a position of rest, with the placement of the springs working against each other and without a cam holding the neutral position, necessitates that the springs be in equilibrium in the neutral position with respect to the force they exert on the lever. Likewise, having the neutral position defined as the point of equilibrium also requires that perturbation from the neutral position causes the bias mechanisms to urge the system

back toward the equilibrium position. Subsequently, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner stated, "applicant is reminded that the claims define the first position as the closed position; not the neutral position." Applicants thus note that the first position of the lever is a neutral position and placing the lever in the neutral first position allows the valve to assume the valve's closed first position. Thus, the apparent discrepancy cited by the Examiner is a misunderstanding by the Examiner as to the first position of the lever and the first position of the valve. Accordingly, removal of the new matter rejection with respect to claims 61-63 is respectfully requested.


IV. Claims 58-63 particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention and are not indefinite.

In rejecting the claims, the Examiner stated, "Claim 58 recites 'a first position' in lines 4 and 5. Claim 61 recites 'a first position' in line 2. If they are meant to be different, then subsequent recitations to 'the first position' are unclear as to which first position is being referred to." Applicants note that claim 58 states "a valve having a portion movable within the conduit between a first position ... and a second position." Thus, claim 58 recites a first and a second position of the valve portion. Claim 61 on the other hand, states, "the lever is movable into a first position." As can be seen from the quoted passages, claim 58 clearly recites first and second positions of the valve portion, and claim 61 clearly recites a first position of a lever. Furthermore, all subsequent uses of the words "first position" are modified to explicitly state whether the valve portion first position or the lever first position is being referenced. Accordingly, claims 58-63 are not indefinite. Removal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above, Applicants submit that the Examiner's rejections of claims 22-24, 26, and 55-63 are without merit. Applicants therefore request that the present rejections be reversed and a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX A
APPLICATION SERIAL NO. 10/085,966
APPEAL BRIEF

CLAIMS AT ISSUE

1-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) A valve assembly including:
a manifold block having an inlet, an outlet, and a conduit in fluid communication with the inlet and with the outlet;
a valve having a portion movable within the conduit between a first position inhibiting fluid communication between the inlet and the outlet, and a second position permitting fluid communication between the inlet and the outlet;
a lever connected to the valve to permit manual movement of the valve between the first and the second positions;
a solenoid connected to the valve to move the valve between the first and second positions in response to an electrical input to the solenoid, the position of the lever being independent of the presence of the electrical input to the solenoid; and
a lock engaging the lever to lock the lever in a position having the valve in the second position.

23. (Original) The assembly of claim 22 wherein the lock includes a lock solenoid and a lock bar coupled to the lock solenoid, the lock bar engaging the lever, and the lock solenoid being operable to move the lock bar in response to an electrical input to the lock solenoid.

24. (Original) The assembly of claim 22 wherein the lock includes a lock bar movable into and out of engagement with the lever and a lock solenoid coupled to the lock bar, the lock solenoid being operable to move the lock bar relative to the lever.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Presented) A valve assembly for a hospital bed including:

a manifold block having an inlet, an outlet configured to connect to a device for positioning the bed, and a conduit in fluid communication with the inlet and with the outlet;

a valve having a portion movable within the conduit between a first position inhibiting fluid communication between the inlet and the outlet, and a second position permitting fluid communication between the inlet and the outlet;

a lever connected to the valve to permit manual movement of the valve between the first and the second positions, the lever being located entirely outside the conduit; and

a solenoid connected directly to the valve to move the valve between the first and second positions in response to an electrical input to the solenoid, the position of the lever being independent of the presence of the electrical input to the solenoid, the solenoid being positioned between the manifold and the lever.

27-54. (Cancelled)

55. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 22, wherein the lock is integral with the lever.

56. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 22, wherein the lock is activated by pressure on the lever.

57. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 26, wherein the solenoid is positioned outside the manifold.

58. (Previously Presented) A valve assembly including:

a manifold block having an inlet, an outlet, a conduit in fluid communication with the inlet and with the outlet;

a valve having a portion movable within the conduit between a first position inhibiting fluid communication between the inlet and the outlet, and a second position permitting fluid communication between the inlet and the outlet;

a lever connected to the valve to permit manual movement of the valve between the first and the second positions, the lever including first and second bias mechanisms, the first bias mechanism urging the lever toward a position that places the valve in the second position, the second bias mechanism urging the lever away from the position that places the valve in the second position; and

a solenoid connected to the valve to move the valve between the first and second positions in response to an electrical input to the solenoid, the position of the lever being independent of the presence of the electrical input to the solenoid.

59. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 58, wherein the first and second bias mechanisms are springs.

60. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 59, wherein compression of the spring of the first bias mechanism results in the elongation of the spring of the second bias mechanism.

61. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 58, wherein the lever is movable into a first position wherein the first and second bias mechanisms are in equilibrium.

62. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 61, wherein when the lever is in the position that places the valve in the second position, the lever is urged toward the first position by the net force of the first and second bias mechanisms.

63. (Previously Presented) The valve assembly of claim 61, wherein the first and second bias mechanisms combine to urge the lever toward the first position when the lever is displaced from the first position.

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